

the Colonists to represent them? Hath their conduct in respect to the Stamp Duty been consistent with the interests of the Colonists? Or hath that conduct been such as the Colonists would have adopted, had they been present in parliament? No surely: So far from it, there are very few members of that assembly, who have ever been heard of in America. The Stamp Duty is inconsistent with their interests, and the mode of imposing it, destructive of their most essential rights and liberties. It is very fortunate for the present members of parliament, that for all that can be done in the Colonies, they have an estate for life in their office; for I believe I may venture to say, that no Colonist in his senses, would ever desire to be again represented by the same people.

To prove that the Colonists are within the [8] meaning of the doctrine of virtual representation, they have been compared to the inhabitants of several corporate towns in England, to the East-India company, the body of London merchants, to the proprietors of the public funds, to women and children, and in short, to all those who do not vote for electing of members of parliament, who are all said to be virtually represented: On the justice and truth of this comparison intirely depends the decision of this question. It may therefore be necessary to observe, that by the ancient English constitution, none were actually represented in parliament, other than Shires, the Cinque-Paris, Cities, and Antient Boroughs, and the elections for them were made by freeholders, and those who held by free burgage tenure; all villeins, copyholders, tenants in antient demeine, and tenants of lords, were exeluded from electing or being elected: but at latest, in King John's time, a praetice obtained of making free boroughs by charter, by which means they became intitled to send members to parliament, and it continued till the reign of King Charles the Second, when the House of Commons voted the elections made by virtue of that King's charters void, and so put a stop to the praetice. From hence it is evident that the right that those derive from their particular species of property, peculiar franchises, and inhabitaney in particuar places, is not an exclusive one, because it either depends on that which may, through the bounty of the crown, be extended, at least to its American subjects, or on a certain species of property that may be bought and sold, [9] and which the Colonists are capable of possessing in